ePME SPOTLIGHT
Newsletter of the DOE E-Government Corporate R&D Portfolio Management Environment (ePME) project

ePME Reaches New Milestone

Successfully Handles 1,234 Proposals

On April 29, the Department of Energy concluded a three-month demonstration of the ePME system which affirmed the system's ability to electronically route research and development proposals from National Laboratories to Headquarters Program Offices.

"Thanks to those who helped design, develop, and deploy ePME – and the support of Senior DOE Management – we now have a proven and reliable system for the electronic submission and approval of National Laboratory proposals," said Vince Dattoria, ePME Project Manager.

A limited number of programs, comprising a representative set of the Department's R&D portfolio, participated in this "production test," using actual R&D proposals. Although the deadline for laboratories to submit R&D proposals in response to this year's Field Budget Call has passed, the ePME system remains open for continued use.

As of April 29:

- 375 users were issued user IDs and passwords to the system
- 2,476 non-licensed Principal Investigators (PIs) were in the application (non-licensed PIs are individuals responsible for the day-to-day technical conduct of work covered by a proposal but are not users of the ePME system.**)**
- 17 National Laboratories had submitted a total of 1,234 proposals
- The following offices had proposals in the system: Office of Science (SC); Fossil Energy (FE); Nuclear Energy, Science, and Technology (NE); and Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EE)

"The successful electronic receipt of National Laboratory proposals, through the ePME system over the past three months, is a major milestone toward using information technology to facilitate R&D management. The Office of Science extends much gratitude to all of you who have made ePME a reality."

Dr. James Decker
Principle Deputy Director
Office of Science

During February through April, National Laboratories, Site/Operations Offices, and participating Headquarters Program Offices exercised the ePME application end-to-end, from the submission of proposals through their final approval or declination by the program office. Principal investigators, technical reviewers, budget analysts, program managers, and top officials were involved in one or more aspects of the submission, review, and approval process.

The majority of the proposals processed were for the Office of Science. Although the ePME system is designed to allow National Laboratories to respond to the annual Field Budget Call by submitting proposals, FE was able to participate to a limited extent because the system was modified to handle FE's Program Implementation Plans (PIPs).

EE's participation in the production test and overall use of the ePME system is still evolving. EE staff and the ePME team are continuing to identify the requirements needed to bridge EE's Annual Operating Plan (AOP) and ePME's Field Work Proposal (FWP) formats. In the meantime, EE has trained select personnel on the ePME system and is defining an AOP/FWP workflow to complement the ePME workflow capabilities.

We will incorporate augmented features and functionality into an updated release of the system, which will be available for use in late 2005.

FROM THE MAILBOX

" I've missed the last Webinar or two, and recalled that you post all the Webinars on your Web site. I thought I'd go review the material, refresh my memory with the training, and try logging on. Nice site. Personal service. So far, if you look at the tremendous challenge of getting the entire DOE complex up to speed with new software, it looks like the ePME is the best-run implementation of a new initiative I've seen in DOE."

Carol Ingram
Berkeley Site Office

Improving ePME with User Feedback

The ePME team has established a Software Change Request (SCR) process to improve the system and make it more user-friendly by asking users to recommend changes to the application. Recommendations can range from altering the application's look and feel to adding functionality.

The SCR process begins when a system user in a National Laboratory, Site/Operations Office or Headquarters Program Office proposes a change to their ePME Site Administration Manager (SAM). If the SAM deems it a potentially helpful and feasible change, the SAM submits an SCR form to the ePME Helpdesk. The Helpdesk verifies the request and forwards the SCR to the SCR Coordinator and a Technical Evaluator. The SCR Coordinator logs the request and communicates the SCR's status to the SAM. The Coordinator also posts the SCR status on the project Web site (http://epme.doe.gov/where/scrstatus.asp) so that the initial requestor, SAMs, and other stakeholders are kept informed. The Technical Evaluator reviews the SCR for feasibility and the level of effort required to implement the change, and provides a recommendation to the Joint Change Control Board (JCCB).

The JCCB oversees the software change request process and is responsible for evaluating change requests, verifying that changes adhere to established standards, and approving or denying SCRs. The Board is comprised of individuals from the ePME project team and has representation from the user community. JCCB members are:

Greg Long, JCCB Chair – ePME Technical Manager
Dave Boron – Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
Pete Muchunas – Office of Fossil Energy
Steve Eckstrand – Office of Science, Program Management
Sharon Betson – Office of Science, Administration
Carol Ingram, Site Office Representative – Berkeley Site Office
Mark Herrling – ePME Project Management Office (non-voting)
Steve Ducharme – ePME Technical (non-voting)
Vince Dattoria – ePME Project Manager (votes only to break a tie)

SAMs have submitted more than 70 SCRs. Those deemed "in-scope" in an initial screening have been forwarded to a Technical Evaluator.

The JCCB is considering SCRs for inclusion in the next release of ePME. We encourage SAMs to continue to submit SCRs as they and their users identify ways to improve the application.

From the Project Manager

In the last newsletter, I expressed appreciation to all project participants, past and present, for bringing ePME to the point where it was ready to receive bona-fide, actual R&D proposals during the recent "production test." In retrospect, calling the February – April period a production test is a misnomer, because select users tested the prototype system last year. But regardless of what we call the last three months, ePME's users have confirmed the system's success and reliability. Even though ePME was extensively tested last year, broad-based participation in the production test enabled us to identify and fix previously undiscovered anomalies. So, it's time again to say ***Thank You*** from the whole ePME project team to Site Administration Managers, Principle Investigators, laboratory support staff, and participating DOE staff at Site and Operations Offices and Headquarters for helping ePME reach another milestone. I especially appreciate the extraordinary effort of the SAMs, whose participation is enabling us to forge ahead with vigor and optimism. Our cooperative effort will ensure continuing progress as we plan and deploy the next release.

—Vince Dattoria

Feedback Requested!

- We want to hear from you. Help promote ePME by telling others about the project or pointing them to the project Web site: http://epme.doe.gov.
- Suggest or submit an article for future editions of *Spotlight*.
- Tell us what you think about ePME. We need your input to successfully enhance and support this first-of-a-kind system.

Contact Jim Fremont, ePME Communication and Outreach Manager, at james.fremont@ee.doe.gov

Spotlight is the official newsletter for the DOE E-Government Corporate R&D Portfolio Management Environment (ePME) project. *Spotlight* is published periodically for federal government employees and contractors interested in ePME activities.

For more information, visit us online at http://epme.doe.gov